

**POLITENESS STRATEGIES OF REFUSAL UTTERANCE  
BY THE ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF MAPK  
MAN 1 SURAKARTA**



**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for Getting  
Bachelor Degree of Education in English Department**

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**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan jenis strategi penolakan yang digunakan dalam penolakan oleh siswa dan untuk menggambarkan jenis strategi kesopanan yang digunakan dalam menolak. Jenis penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Subjek penelitian adalah 20 siswa perempuan dan 27 siswa laki-laki dari siswa kelas sebelas MAPK MAN 1 Surakarta. Data penelitian ini adalah ucapan penolakan yang diambil melalui sembilan situasi dengan kekuatan dan jarak yang berbeda dalam Tugas Penyelesaian Wacana (DCT). Sumber data penelitian ini adalah ucapan yang digunakan oleh siswa kelas sebelas MAPK MAN 1 Surakarta yang berisi ucapan penolakan. Data dianalisis dengan strategi penolakan Bebee et al dan strategi kesopanan Brown dan Levinson. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa partisipan menggunakan dua jenis penolakan, yaitu langsung dan tidak langsung meskipun mereka juga menggunakan formula elaborasi *adjunct*. Hampir semua siswa cenderung langsung dalam menolak permintaan, undangan dan saran. Penulis juga menemukan bahwa sebagian besar siswa menggunakan kesopanan negatif.

**Kata kunci:** tindak tutur, strategi penolakan, strategi kesopanan.

**Abstract**

This study aims to describe the types of refusal strategies used in refusing by the students and to describe the types of politeness strategies used in refusing. The type of this research is descriptive qualitative. The subjects of the study are 20 female students and 27 male students of the eleventh grade students of MAPK MAN 1 Surakarta. The data of the study are refusal utterances that taken through the nine situations with different power and distance in the Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The data source of the research is utterances used by eleventh grade students of MAPK MAN 1 Surakarta that containing refusal utterance. The data were analyzed by Bebee et al's refusal strategy and Brown and Levinson's politeness strategy. The finding of the study showed that the participants use two types of refusal, namely direct and indirect while they elaborated formula of adjunct. Almost all of the students tended to use direct in refusing a request, invitation and suggestion. The writer also found that most of the students used negative politeness.

**Keywords:** speech act, refusal strategies, politeness strategies.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Language is a tool to communicate with other people. Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication (Wardhugh (in Srijono 2010:1)). Students need to develop communicative efficiency in interaction. Language can be written and spoken. Teachers have to teach how to use language to communicate properly, they not only teach syntactic or semantic properties with the formal structures of language out of context. The proper way to communicate is perpetuate communication and does not destroy relationships between speaker and hearer. In the learning process the students showed speak politely.

Permendikbud RI No 24, the contains basic competencies which is developed from core competencies that refer to the achievement that must be achieved by students. Students are required to establish the abilities to perform transactional and interpersonal act. Of these competencies, teachers are able to teach students to communicate politely to the people around him with attention to power and social distance. The books have facilitated them.

One of the transactional and interpersonal acts is refusal utterances. Refusal and politeness strategies showed be implemented properly suitable with the context of speech. If the speakers do not use the strategy properly, they will not only destroy the communication but also the social relation. People, as a speaker, will try to avoid it. The success of communication will occur when people apply politeness in their conversation. Refusing utterances often appear in daily conversations. Without speaker knowing, sometimes his rejection of one's request will give a negative impression.

Brown and Levinson (1987) opine the aspects of face, facework and acts that threaten face, sociological variables influencing face threat, and five general ways (or 'superstrategies') of counterbalancing face threat with (at least some) specific linguistic strategies. They classify two related components of face: positive face and negative face. Positive face is the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others in particular. Negative face is the want of every competent adult member that his actions be unimpeded by others.

Language acquisition plays important role in constructing context. Children begin to form language acquisition since they are still staged early in speaking. They began to record the sentences that they often hear. That's when they begin to create the ability that has been accepted. Pragmatic competence is the knowledge of production and comprehension of language in communication.

This study is conducted at MAPK MAN 1 Surakarta. Especially, the researcher takes the data at the eleventh grade students. The data are refusal utterances that taken through the nine situations with different power and distance in the Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The data were analyzed by Bebee et al's refusal strategy and Brown and Levinson's politeness strategy. The researcher choses this school because it has proven to be the school of choice among other schools. It proves with achievements that has been achieved, including a variety of speeches in Indonesia, English and Arabic.

Based on explanation above, the writer states the differences between her studies with previous studies. Most of the previous study conducted the research with participants who have known pragmatics, like an English teacher or college students. The difference of this study is analyzed refusal utterance from senior high school students. The writer is going to analyze the types of refusal strategies and the types of politeness strategies of refusing utterances. The writer conduct a research under the title THE POLITENESS STRATEGIES OF REFUSAL UTTERANCE USED BY THE ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF MAPK MAN 1 SURAKARTA.

## **2. METHOD**

This type of the research is descriptive qualitative. The subjects of the study are 20 female students and 27 male students of the eleventh grade students of MAPK MAN 1 Surakarta. The data of the study are refusal utterances that taken through the nine situations with different power and distance in the Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The data sources of the research are utterances used by the eleventh grade students of MAPK MAN 1 Surakarta that containing refusal utterance. DCT consists of three powers and three social distances. Three powers are higher, equal

and lower. Then, three social distances are familiar, close and unfamiliar. To analyze the data, the writer uses six steps, as follows: (1) To clarifying the refusal strategies, the writer uses the theory of Beebe et al. (2) To describe the politeness strategies, the writer uses the theory of Brown and Levinson. (3) To analyze refusal strategies of refusing utterance made by the students based on Beebe et al. (4) To analyze politeness strategies of refusing utterance made by the students based on Brown and Levinson's Theory. (5) Summarizing. (6) The last is drawing conclusion.

### 3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Types of Refusal Strategies

##### 3.1.1 Close Higher (DCT 1)

The writer finds out three kinds of refusal strategies used by the speaker, namely direct refusal 80,85% and indirect refusal 19,15%. The cause that the speaker is higher in power in the close relation, the students tend to use direct refusal with apology dominantly. The other strategies are alternative strategy, direct strategy and adjunct.

**I can't** accompany you to go to the movie. **Because I have** to study to prepare my examination. (1/CH/F) [NW+Reason]

##### 3.1.2 Close Equal (DCT 2),

The writer finds out three refusal strategies which are used by the students. Those strategies are direct refusal 74,47% and indirect refusal 25,53%. In the case of this DCT, the highest percentage is direct refusal. It means that with close friends he still used apology strategy to refuse the speaker.

**Because I have a schedule to prepare my family from Bali** with your kind heart **I'm so sorry I can't**. (2/CE/M) [R+Apo+NW]

##### 3.1.3 Close Lower (DCT 3)

The writer finds out three refusal strategies which are used by the students, direct refusal 36,17% and indirect refusal 63,83%. The context is happened between father with his son/daughter that have passed from



senior high school. The speaker have close relation and minus power. The speaker use indirect and elaborated adjunct to speak more polite.

**I can't** oh father **because I will plan continue me study in English department program.** (3/CL/M) [NW+R]

#### 3.1.4 Familiar Higher (DCT 4)

The writer finds out three refusal strategies which used by students. Those strategies are direct refusal 74,60% and indirect refusal 24,40%,. The speakers use apology strategy commonly.

Oh.. **I'm sorry I can't** come to your birthday party because my grandma is sick and I have to take care her at a hospital. (1/FH/M) [NW+Apo+R]

#### 3.1.5 Familiar Equal (DCT 5)

Indirect refusal has the highest percentages. The writer finds out two refusal strategies which are used by the students. Those strategies are direct refusal 63,83% and indirect refusal 36,17%. The speakers use apology strategy dominantly.

**I can't brought you money.** Because my many for pay tuition fee. If I have save money I want to brought you. [NW+R]

#### 3.1.6 Familiar Lower (DCT 6)

Based on the chart, indirect refusal has the highest percentages. The writer finds out two refusal strategies which are used by the students. Those strategies are direct refusal 59,57% and indirect refusal 40,43%,.The value of indirect refusal is higher than direct refusal. It can be concluded that the speakers realize that they speak with the hearer who has higher power and familiar distance.

**I'm sorry** I can't. (1/FL/M) [NW+Apo]

#### 3.1.7 Unfamiliar Higher (DCT 7)

The writer finds out three refusal strategies which are used by the students. Those strategies are direct refusal 48,94%, indirect refusal 46,81%, and adjunct to refusal 4,26%. It can be shown that the speakers speak more polite because they speak with the hearer who has long distance.

**I'm sorry** I can't because I have not finished reading. (1/UH/M)  
[NW+Apo+R]

### 3.1.8 Unfamiliar Equal (DCT 8)

The writer finds out three refusal strategies which are used by the students. Those strategies are direct refusal 61,71% and indirect refusal 38,29%. In case of unfamiliar and higher DCT, the students use direct refusal strategy, it is 61,71%. It can be shown that the speakers keep being polite although they speak with the hearer who has equal power.

With pleasure, but in Sunday I can't because I have with my brother.  
**Maybe tomorrow.** (27/UE/M) [NW+R+Alter]

### 3.1.9 Unfamiliar and lower (DCT 9)

The writer finds out three refusal strategies which are used by the students. Those are direct refusal 48,94%, indirect refusal 51,06%. It can be shown that the speakers speak more polite because they speak with the hearer who has higher power than them.

Sorry miss, **I think I come late** and I must go to my class now.  
(3/UL/F) [Apo+R+Gr]

Based on data above, the researcher compared with the previous research that has similar theme. The previous research that has relation is conducted by Hartuti (2014). The result shows that the English teachers of junior high school in Madiun regency applied two semantic formulae *indirect* and *direct strategies* in conjunction to adjunct identified by Beebe *et al.* (1990) across three refusals acts (invitations, offers and suggestions).

## 3.2 Types of Politeness Strategies

### 3.2.1 Close-higher (DCT 1)

In this case, the writer finds out three types of politeness strategies that are used by participants. Those are bald on record (BOR) 14,89%, positive politeness (PP) 44,69% and negative politeness (NP) 40,42%. The context is between the speaker and his/her little brother. If the speaker use positive politeness is proper.

### 3.2.2 Close-Equal (DCT 2)

In Close-Equal (DCT 2), the most dominant strategy is negative politeness. The writer finds out three kinds of politeness strategies that are used by participants. Those strategies are bald on record (BOR) 36,17%, positive politeness (PP) 14,9,51% and negative politeness (NP) 55,32%. The context is between the speaker and his/her close friend. Based on the reason, the speaker makes being peace a situation, and there is no crash between them. Although the speaker still appropriate when he/she uses bald on record or negative politeness.

### 3.2.3 Close-Lower (DCT 3)

In Close-Lower (DCT 3), it can be drawn that the students dominant use positive politeness. The writer finds out four types of politeness strategies that are used by participants. Those strategies are bald on record (BOR) 34,04%, positive politeness (PP) 4,26%, negative politeness (NP) 53,29% and off record (OR) 6,38%. The context is between the speaker and his/her father which the speaker has equal distance and lower power. The speaker uses negative politeness to keep being polite with his/her father that has higher power than the speaker.

### 3.2.4 Familiar-higher (DCT 4)

In Familiar-higher (DCT 4), it can be seen that the dominant strategy is negative politeness. The writer finds out four types of politeness strategies that are used by participants. Those strategies are bald on record (BOR) 14,89%, positive politeness (PP) 10,64%, negative politeness (NP) 72,34% and off record (OR) 2,13%. The context is between the speaker and his/her lower people that the speaker has minus distance and higher power. Because of minus distance, the speaker uses negative politeness to speak more politely with the hearer. Although he/she speaks with the lower people that have lower power.

### 3.2.5 Familiar-Equal (DCT 5)

In Familiar-Equal (DCT 5), it shows that the most of percentage is bald on record. Those strategies are bald on record (BOR) 34,04%, positive

politeness (PP) 31,91%, negative politeness (NP) 27,7% and off record (OR) 6,38%. The context is between the speaker and hearer has equal distance. Even though, the speaker speaks directly, it is no problem.

#### 3.2.6 Familiar-Lower (DCT 6)

In Familiar-Lower (DCT 6), it can be seen that the most of percentage is positive politeness. Those strategies are bald on record (BOR) 17,02%, positive politeness (PP) 68,09%, negative politeness (NP) 8,51% and off record (OR) 6,38%. The context is between the speaker and his/her teacher that the speaker has minus distance and lower power. The speaker uses positive politeness when they are refusing his/her teacher. It is appropriate and politely.

#### 3.2.7 Unfamiliar-higher (DCT 7)

In Unfamiliar-higher (DCT 7), it shows that the most of percentage is negative politeness. Those strategies are bald on record (BOR) 36,17%, positive politeness (PP) 4,26%, negative politeness (NP) 53,19% and off record (OR) 6,38%. The context is between the speaker and his/her brother's friend that the speaker has minus distance and higher power. The speaker shows that he/she have to speak politely. Although he/she speaks with people who have lower power.

#### 3.2.8 Unfamiliar-Equal (DCT 8)

In Unfamiliar-Equal (DCT 8), it shows that bald on record and negative politeness has the same average. Those strategies are bald on record (BOR) 44,68%, positive politeness (PP) 8,51%, negative politeness (NP) 44,68% and off record (OR) 2,18%. The context is between the speaker and his/her that has minus distance and equal power. So, the speaker speaks politely to create a pleasure moment in each others.

#### 3.2.9 Unfamiliar-Lower (DCT 9)

In Unfamiliar-Lower (DCT 9), it shows that the most dominant strategy is positive politeness. Those strategies are bald on record (BOR) 17,02%, positive politeness (PP) 51,06%, negative politeness (NP) 21,28% and off record (OR) 10,64%. The context is between the

speaker and his/her teacher that the speaker has minus distance and lower power. The speaker knows, to whom he/she speaks. He/she have to speak polite with people that older then him/her.

Based on data above, the researcher compared with the previous research. The previous research that has relation is conducted by Kinanthi (2017). The result of her research shows that there are five politeness strategies used by the students, namely bald on record strategy, positive politeness strategy and negative politeness strategy, combination strategies, bald off record strategy. Here, the researcher uses similar theory but the result has difference finding. Kinanthi has found five strategy, while the researcher in this research only found four types of politeness strategy, namely bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness and off record.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

##### **4.1 Refusal Strategies**

The writer finds out some data based on data analysis and discussion. In this research, the writer finds out three types of refusal strategies, namely direct refusal, indirect refusal, and adjunct. The average percentages of refusal strategies in this research are 61,01 of direct refusal and 35,70 of indirect refusal. In the findings, the participants dominant use direct refusal types.

##### **4.2 Politeness Strategies**

Based on data analysis and discussion of the finding, the writer finds out four types of politeness strategies. They are Bald on Record (BOR), positive politeness (PP), negative politeness (NP), and off record (OR). The dominant strategy which has higher value as 43,51%, namely negative politeness. The second types, there is bald on record which has value 26,00%. The third percentages, there is positive politeness as 25,77%. The last, there is off record strategy as 4,50%. In almost all situation of the DCT, the respondents used positive politeness strategy. According to Brown and Levinson's Theory (1987:66), disagreement should threatened H's positive face.

Hartuti's finding on politeness strategy used by English teachers that used all four politeness strategies namely, bald on record (BOR), positive politeness (PP), negative politeness (NP), and off record (OR). In this research, participants use three refusals acts in more or less the same frequency, except in declining offers they did not use OR strategy. Moreover, Nobarany and Booth's finding on politeness strategy used by reviewers in an open peer review process of a special track of a Human-Computer Interaction conference. Reviewers tended to use more positive politeness strategies.

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